

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EUR-25 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 SAJ-01 ACDA-19 EB-11 DRC-01 /159 W

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P 111700Z APR 74

FM AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1884

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY

AMCONSUL ISTANBUL PRIORITY

AMCONSUL IZMIR PRIORITY

S E C R E T THESSALONIKI 0195

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, GR, TU

SUBJECT: ANTI-TURKISH PRESS CAMPAIGN GAINS MOMENTUM

REF: THESS 0190

SUMMARY. "ELLINIKOS VORRAS" OF APRIL 11 CARRIES MOST VIRULENT ATTACK ON TURKEY IN LOCAL PRESS SINCE 1967 CYPRUS CRISIS. CONGEN BELIEVES CONTINUED APPEARANCE THESE ARTICLES REFLECTS AT LEAST TACIT SUPPORT OF SOME LOCAL ARMY OFFICERS FOR HARD LINE POSITION. END SUMMARY.

1. "ELLINIKOS VORRAS" OF APRIL 11 CARRIES LOCAL ANTI-TURKISH CAMPAIGN TO NEW EXTREME WITH VIRULENT FRONT PAGE LEAD EDITORIAL BY CHIEF ED ELIAS KYROU, ENTITLED "THE BOLD TRUTH". ARTICLE BEGINS WITH REFERENCE TO "OBLIGATION" WHICH GREEKS OWE TO TURKS ON OCCASION OF HOLY WEEK FOR REVEALING THROUGH RECENT "WORDS AND ACTIONS OF OFFICIALS" GOT "EXPANSIONIST SHIFT TOWARD GREECE". KYROU CONTINUES THAT, BASICALLY, TURKS SEEK TO "OCCUPY AEGEAN, ENCIRCLING MYTILENE, LIMNOS, CHIOS, RHODES AND OTHER GREEK ISLANDS" IN ORDER TO "GRAB OIL OF GREEK ARCHIPELAGO."

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2. EDITORIAL CONTINUES WITH EXTENSIVE OUTLINE OF ALLEGED TURKISH PERFDY DURING 1955 DESTRUCTION OF GREEK PROPERTIES IN ISTANBUL AND IZMIR, AND 1964 CYPRUS CONFRONTATION, AND STRONGLY ATTACKS UK FOR ALLEGED SUPPORT OF METAXAS DICTATORSHIP AND SELLOUT OF KING GEORGE II. IN PRESENT CASE, KYROU CHARGES, BBC IS "REMINISCENT OF HITLER'S GERMAN RADIO" SEEKING TO "INTIMIDATE GREEKS". CANCELLATION OF RECENT UK SHIP VISITS WAS INTENDED TO FURTHER "COINCIDENCE OF INTEREST BETWEEN BRITAIN, TURKEY AND OTHERS". FURTHER, IT NOT IN UK INTEREST FOR GREECE TO EXPLOIT AEGEAN OIL BUT RATHER TO REMAIN "ECONOMIC SLAVE OF FOREIGNERS". ON OTHER HAND, KYROU WRITES, TURKS ALSO SEEK OIL AND, THEREFORE, NOW TURNING ATTENTION TO CYPRUS AND WESTERN THRACE, WHICH EVIDENT FROM GOT NEWSPAPER AND RADIO REPORTS.

3. ARTICLE CONTINUES THAT GREEKS NOW "WAKING UP RAPIDLY AND ANGER GROWING". FACED WITH "ATTEMPTED TURKISH THEFT", GREEKS WILL SECURE OWN "ROCKS AND OIL" AGAINST "IMPERIALIST THIEVERY". GREEKS PREPARED TO "RISE AS ONE MAN AND REACT VIOLENTLY". FIRST TO "RISE AGAINST ASIAN ROBBERS IF NEED BE" WILL BE CHILDREN OF REFUGEES WHO "REMEMBER MASSACRE OF PARENTS AND GRANDPARENTS AND WOMEN RAPED BY IMPUDENT JACKALS OF ASIA", ETC. AS IN 1940, GREECE CAN EXPECT NO FOREIGN SUPPORT IF ATTACKED, KYROU WRITES.

4. EDITORIAL CONCLUDES THAT THOSE ATTEMPTING TO TREAD ON GREEK TERRITORY "WILL DIE" AND GREEKS READY TO "CHASE BEASTS BACK TO THEIR LAIRS, WHICH THEY WILL DESTROY". IF WESTERN LEADERS DO NOT RESTRAIN TURKS, "SO MUCH THE WORSE FOR UNFORTUNATE ATLANTIC ALLIANCE, WHICH WILL SUFFER FATE WORSE THAN THAT DURING GERMAN-ITALIAN ATTACK ON GREECE". UNLESS "THEY" (UNSPECIFIED) "LEAVE US ALONE, WITHOUT INTERFERENCE, TO PUSH BACK TURKISH HORDES FROM LAST OCCUPIED POINT OF EUROPE", EQUILIBRIUM WILL BE SHAKEN TO FOUNDATIONS.

5. APART FROM ABOVE, ALL THESS PAPERS CARRY TEXT OF ATHENS RELEASE DENYING REPORTED ALLEGATIONS IN TURKISH MEDIA AND REPORT FROM ISTANBUL OF ANTI-GREEK STUDENT

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DEMONSTRATIONS (ATHENS REPORTING SEPARATELY). "VORRAS" CARRIES BANNER HEADLINE "GREECE DENOUNCES ANTI-GREEK CAMPAIGN OF TURKISH PRESS", AND ON INSIDE PAGE LARGE REPRODUCTION OF APRIL 9 "HURRIYET" PURPORTING TO SHOW "DISTORTED" ORDER OF BATTLE OF TWO SIDES.

6. BEGIN COMMENT: WHILE LATEST KYROU ARTICLE DISMISSED BY SOME OBSERVERS AS IRRESPONSIBLE AND INCONSISTENT,

CONGEN BELIEVES EXTRACTS ABOVE NECESSARY TO CONVEY FULL VITRIOLIC FLAVOR OF PIECE. EDITORIAL BELIEVED TO BE MOST INFLAMMATORY IN LOCAL PRESS SINCE 1967 CYPRUS CRISIS. DISTURBING QUESTION IS WHY PRESS-CONTROLLING GOG (OR ELEMENT OF IT) PERMITTED PUBLICATION OF PIECE AFTER YESTERDAY'S VIOLENT ATTACK ON TURKEY BY SAME EDITOR (REFTEL).

7. "MAKEDONIA" EDITOR DEMADIS, ADMITTEDLY A COMPETITOR OF KYROU, INFORMED SENIOR USIS LOCAL APRIL 10 THAT THESS MIL CMDR BRIG GEN TASSOPOULOS PROVIDING MUCH OF KYROU MATERIAL. WHILE POSSIBLY EXAGGERATED, THIS CONSISTENT WITH EARLIER REPORTS OF COMMON KYROU-TASSOPOULOS HARD LINE VIEW ON TURKEY (REF). CONGEN CONTINUES TO BELIEVE THAT KYROU'S REPEATED ATTACKS ON TURKEY PRESUME AT LEAST TACIT SUPPORT OF SENIOR MILITARY OFFICERS HERE, IF NOT IN ATHENS.

8. CONGEN NOT IN POSITION TO ASSESS WHETHER PUBLICATION OF THESE ARTICLES REFLECTS GENERAL GOG AGREEMENT TO ALLOW FREE REIN FOR SELECTED NATIONALIST SPOKESMAN, OR ONLY PARTICULAR VIEWS OF CERTAIN KEY NORTHERN GREEK OFFICERS. IN EITHER CASE, KYROU'S VIOLENT RHETORIC FAR EXCEEDS THAT THUS FAR CARRIED IN ATHENS PRESS. END COMMENT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, CONTINENTAL SHELF, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, BOUNDARY CLAIMS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 11 APR 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: BoyleJA
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974THESSA00195
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740084-1176
From: THESSALONIKI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19740447/aaaabqeu.tel
Line Count: 140
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: THESS 0190
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: BoyleJA
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 14 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <14 MAY 2002 by shawdg>; APPROVED <26 MAR 2003 by BoyleJA>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ANTI-TURKISH PRESS CAMPAIGN GAINS MOMENTUM
TAGS: PFOR, PINS, GR, TU
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005